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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
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October 2, 2018

The Honorable Dan Smith  
Director  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Smith:

I write to request that the National Park Service (NPS) conduct a Reconnaissance Survey of a site near Carpenter Street in Springfield, Illinois associated with the Springfield Race Riot (Riot) of 1908. This site contains foundations of homes destroyed in a fire during the 1908 Riot that subsequently led to the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). This site is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

The City of Springfield is currently in the process of completing a \$315 million-dollar rail relocation project to address safety, delays and vehicle congestion. During construction of the first segment of this project near Carpenter Street, portions of the foundations of seven houses were discovered. Archaeological investigations ultimately resulted in the determination that five of these foundations were from mid-nineteenth century houses that had been destroyed by fire during the Riot.

In order to highlight the national significance of the Riot and this property, leadership from the state and local chapters of the NAACP, elected officials, and other community leaders have taken the unified position that a memorial should be created at the site. As part of this process, the community would like to transfer this property, owned by the City of Springfield, to the NPS as the Springfield Race Riot National Historic Site.

My staff has begun working with your team on drafting legislation and a legislative map of the site. In order to continue to move this process forward, I respectfully request the NPS begin conducting a Reconnaissance Survey promptly. I would also like to personally invite you to join me in visiting the site.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. This is an issue of critical importance to the Springfield community and I look forward to working with you on it.

Sincerely,



Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress

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